

# SKIN-TO-SKIN

Here at WRMC, we promote and support skin-to-skin for all moms and babies.

## “Hi Mom. I’m home!”

That is the expression that best states your baby’s desire right after birth: to be next to you! You have been “home” for the past nine or so months, the place of warmth, feeding and comfort. The best way to bring baby back into this place of comfort and warmth with you is called skin-to-skin

Adapted from Sutter Health, Sacramento Sierra Region



## WHAT IS SKIN-TO-SKIN?

Your baby is placed bare-skinned or in no more than a diaper on your bare chest.

Skin-to-skin is important for you and your baby no matter what feeding choice is best for you.

Any assessments or procedures that are done routinely can be delayed or performed while you and your baby share this special time together.

For a vaginal birth, the infant is dried and placed directly skin-to-skin, as long as baby is medically stable.

For a cesarean birth, the infant is placed skin-to-skin as soon as mother is able to respond to her infant and baby is medically stable.

If there is a delay between birth and direct skin-to-skin, your partner may perform skin-to-skin until you are available.

This first skin-to-skin will last until after the completion of the first breastfeed. If you are not breastfeeding, it will last at least one hour. Skin-to-skin may continue as long as you desire and is feasible for the infant.

Here at WRMC, we encourage this type of care as much as possible during your stay and at home. If your baby is fussy, this will help calm your baby. If too sleepy to nurse, this will stimulate and arouse your baby to feed. Skin-to-skin time continues to help make your baby warm and comforted and make breastfeeding a successful and enjoyable experience.

## Benefits of Skin-to-skin

1. **Happier Baby**- your baby is comforted by being placed skin-to-skin with you. They are calmer and cry less. Also, it is a form of pain-relief during an injection or heel-stick procedure.
2. **Healthier Baby**- your baby will warm up better and learn to stabilize their temperature, respirations, heart rate, and blood sugar. Your baby’s oxygen levels are highest when skin-to-skin. Your baby will gain weight better and breastfeed better and longer.
3. **Happier & Healthier Mother**- being skin-to-skin helps lower your stress hormones and makes you feel closer to your baby. This is the best time to get to know one another! The movement of your baby’s body on your body stimulates hormones that cause your uterus to contract and therefore bleed less.
4. **Better Breastfeeding**- when placed undisturbed on their mother’s chest, between the breasts, your baby may crawl towards your nipple and latch unassisted. Your baby is able to smell the colostrum in your breast, it has a similar smell to amniotic fluid that naturally draws them to your breast. Additionally, your baby’s hand movements at breast, along with their sucking, cause your body to release milk-making hormones. Your baby needs to be close to the breast to learn to breastfeed. This first skin-to-skin time is the best opportunity to begin nursing well.